

**Report of Survey Visit
Sam Houston State University in Huntsville, Texas
Baccalaureate Degree Nursing Education**

Summary of Request:

Consider the report of the April 18, 2013 survey visit to Sam Houston State University (SHSU) Baccalaureate Degree Nursing (BSN) Education Program in Huntsville, Texas (See Attachment #1). The survey visit was conducted by LeAnn Wagner, MSN, RN, who is contracted as a Board Program Evaluator. The previous survey visit was made prior to the opening of the new BSN program at SHSU in 2011.

Historical Perspective:

- The BSN program at SHSU was approved by the Board to begin in 2011. The program admits students in their junior year after they have completed prerequisites.
- The program had its first graduates in December 2012 and will have an NCLEX-RN® examination pass rate for 2013 at the end of the examination year, September 30, 2013.
- The program went through the process seeking nursing accreditation by the Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing Inc. (ACEN) (formerly the National League for Nursing Accrediting Commission or NLNAC) with a survey visit in February 2013. The final accreditation decision has not been released. The program is also seeking nursing accreditation from the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE) and that survey visit will be conducted during Fall 2013.
- The program is still on initial approval until the end of the examination year. This survey visit report will document the program's status as an active program, and findings will be considered after the program's 2013 NCLEX-RN® examination pass rate has been determined.
- The current program director is Anne Stiles, PhD, RN, who was appointed in July, 2012.
- LeAnn Wagner conducted a full survey with the program in action. The initial survey visit only includes information about the physical site and resources before students are enrolled.

Highlights from Findings in the Survey Visit:

- The program has identified the program threads and course objectives indicating that students are prepared to demonstrate the *Differentiated Essential Competencies for Graduates of Texas Nursing Programs*.
- The faculty is presently engaged in revising the Conceptual Model for the curriculum to improve the flow of curriculum elements throughout the program of study. Currently the courses in the curriculum are not clearly linked to one another though the student learning outcomes in each course does provide some continuity.
- The organizational chart demonstrates lines of communication, authority, and responsibility between the nursing program and the College of Science as well as within the nursing program.
- The College of Nursing and Allied Health Programs will be established during the summer of 2013 and the nursing department will reside in this college.
- When Dr. Stiles joined the program as director in July 2012, the program had been without strong leadership for almost a year. Dr. Stiles has been able to move the program forward and to recruit needed qualified nursing faculty.

- The faculty workload policy for the nursing faculty takes into account their responsibilities supervising students in the clinical learning experiences.
- Nursing faculty are allotted funds for professional development.
- Faculty minutes were reviewed but it was apparent that minutes of committee meetings were not in order to support faculty decisions.
- The first cohort of twenty-one (21) students graduates in December 2012. There are currently seventy-nine (79) students enrolled in the program. Students are admitted each fall and each spring.
- The Nursing Department governance system includes student representation on every nursing committee to participate in developing and clarifying program policies.
- The program of study consists of 59 credit hours of support courses and 62 credit hours of nursing courses, totaling 121 total semester credit hours.
- Clinical learning experiences are carried out in a variety of clinical settings where students can achieve the clinical objectives.
- The Program Evaluator spoke with two (2) graduates employed at Huntsville Memorial Hospital who spoke very positively about the program and confirmed that the program prepared them for practice.

Pros and Cons from the Survey Visit:

Pros:

- Students and graduates are very positive about the quality of the program and the support and guidance they receive from the director and faculty.
- The university administration is supportive of the program and plan new facilities to house the nursing program and other allied health programs.
- The Master Program Evaluation Plan is very detailed but easily understood by faculty, students, and community stakeholders.

Cons:

- Although the curriculum contains all the necessary elements, a unifying framework will facilitate the flow of the curriculum elements throughout the program of study. (Note: The program director advised me on June 20, 2013, that the faculty are actively and positively working on the conceptual framework.)
- Minutes of all committee meetings lacked organization and did not provide evidence of decision-making by the faculty.

Rationale for the Recommendation:

Even though the BSN program is new and has experienced challenges, the new director and the faculty group are functioning very positively. The program also has administrative support and the promise of moving to new facilities in the new College of Nursing and Allied Health Programs. The program is a candidate for accreditation by the ACEN and is also in candidate status with CCNE. The Program Evaluator identified a few areas for program improvement mentioned in the Board Staff recommendation.

Staff Recommendation:

Move to accept the report of findings from the survey visit to the Sam Houston State University Baccalaureate Degree Nursing Program in Huntsville, Texas, and to issue two (2) recommendations:

- The program should complete the revision of the Conceptual Model for the curriculum to improve the flow of the curriculum elements throughout the program of study. The completed revision of the Conceptual Model shall be submitted to Board Staff no later than October 1, 2013.
- The program should develop a plan to document faculty decision-making in the committee minutes and organize the minutes chronologically to provide evidence of decision-making. A written plan for documenting and filing faculty minutes shall be provided to Board Staff no later than September 1, 2013. (See draft letter in Attachment #2.)

**Summary of Survey Visit
Sam Houston State University
Baccalaureate Degree Nursing Education Program**

Purpose of Visit: survey visit following graduation of first cohort

Date of Visit: April 18, 2013

Board Contracted Program Evaluator: LeAnn Wagner, MSN, RN

Program Evaluator met with:

- John Pascarella, PhD, Dean, College of Sciences
- Jack Turner, PhD, Director, Medical and Allied Health Programs
- Dr. Michael Lacourse, Dean, (proposed) College of Allied Health
- Lynn McMMain (former RN), Librarian, Head of Reference and Instructional Service
- Ann Theodori, Director, Sam Houston Writing Center
- Andrew Miller, PhD, Executive Director, Counseling Center & Services for Students with Disabilities
- Anne Stiles, PhD, RN, Program Director
- Lilibeth Al-Kohafy, PhD, RN, Adult Health Faculty
- Amy Antley, MSN, RN, CEN, CFRN, RN, Fundamentals Faculty
- Victoria Landry, MSN, APN-BC, RN, Geriatric Faculty
- Mary Ann Vincent, PhD, ACNS-BC, RN, Adult Health, Pathophysiology & Pharmacology and Research Faculty
- Shirley Wallace, MSN, PhD (c), RN, Psychiatric and Community Nursing Faculty
- Kelly Zinn, PhD, RN, Maternal, Infant, and Pediatric Faculty
- Kerry Berry, Administrative Assistant to Dr. Stiles
- Lisa Ward, Nursing Program Secretary
- Amber Prichard, RN, Program Graduate
- Matt Nadzak, RN, Program Graduates
- Tammy Stanfield, RN, ICU Leadership Preceptor
- Lauren Lindemann, SN in ICU Leadership Clinical
- 25 students from cohorts 2,3, and 4

Program Evaluator:

- Reviewed the curriculum materials including all syllabi
- Reviewed the Student and Faculty Handbooks
- Reviewed the clinical evaluation tools
- Reviewed the total program evaluation plan, conceptual model, and committee minutes
- Reviewed student assignments and tests
- Reviewed student files, faculty files, and clinical affiliation agreements
- Observed Health Assessment class in session
- Toured the Sam Houston State University Campus including Student Services and the Library
- Toured the nursing offices, classrooms, and skills labs
- Conducted exit conference

Summary of Findings

Philosophy/Mission and Objectives/Outcomes

- The faculty have developed a detailed chart that demonstrates the relationship among their 10 program threads (referred to as Broad Topics), the *Differentiated Essential Competencies for Graduates of Texas Nursing Programs (DECs)*, and the objectives of each course.
- The Philosophy and Mission of the program were developed by the initial program director and then according to the Master Evaluation Plan, they were reviewed during a Curriculum Meeting in April of 2012. However minutes of that meeting were not taken so this review is not documented.
- The clinical evaluation tools have objectives written in behavioral terms and show progression in expectation for student performance.
- The Conceptual Model that the faculty has developed is directly related to the Master Evaluation Plan but it does not provide the underlying structure for the organization of nursing content nor demonstrate the threads (broad topics) that run throughout the entire curriculum. All of the appropriate elements of the curriculum are present, but there is not a Conceptual Framework that shows how all the curricular elements are related and flow from semester to semester in the program. Consequently the courses in the curriculum are not clearly linked to one another although the presence of the Program Student Learning Outcomes in each course does provide some continuity. The faculty has just adopted a standard syllabus template which will also help demonstrate flow and continuity of the content.

Administration and Organization

- The organizational chart found in the faculty and student handbooks demonstrates lines of communication, authority, and responsibility between the nursing program and the College of Sciences as well as within the nursing program. Currently the Department of Nursing is found in the College of Sciences, however beginning in the summer of 2013 the College of Nursing and Allied Health Programs will be established and the nursing department will reside in this college. There is also a separate department of nursing governance committee chart which explains the committee structure of the nursing department.
- There appears to be very good communication between the nursing department and the college administration with good support provided for the department. The dismissal policies of the department are general with some specific, but not limiting, examples. The administration has been supportive of upholding these policies with the Nursing Department Director making the final decision on program dismissals.
- Even though she has been at the University for less than one year, Dr. Stiles has received excellent support in moving the program forward and graduating the first class. When the initial program director left in the fall of 2011, the faculty members were able to continue operating the program successfully until Dr. Stiles was hired in July of 2012. At that time there was some turnover in faculty but Dr. Stiles has been able to recruit a sufficient number of well qualified faculty by the fall of 2012 to apply for accreditation from the Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing, Inc. (ACEN) (formerly the National League for Nursing Accrediting Commission) initial accreditation with a survey visit this past February. The report from this visit is very positive with the final decision on initial accreditation due very soon. The program hired a consultant to assist them in developing their Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE) application with their survey visit taking place in the fall of 2013.
- It is clear that Dr. Stiles does have the authority to direct the program. She is responsible for teaching a 3-credit hour research course every year.

Faculty

- Faculty policies found in the Faculty Handbook include faculty qualifications, responsibilities, performance evaluation criteria (tenure, promotion, and evaluation guidelines are the same as the academic faculty and this information is found on the University website) terms of employment, detailed faculty orientation plan, expectations for professional development.
- Because the nursing faculty are the only faculty members in the university who are responsible for direct clinical supervision, the nursing department workload formula is different than the academic faculty workload formula. Although this is a complex formula it appears to take into account the unique responsibilities of university nursing faculty members. Faculty indicated they felt the formula was fair and allowed them adequate time to fulfill all their responsibilities.
- Only faculty members holding a doctoral degree are eligible for tenure with master's prepared faculty placed in non-tenure tracks. Faculty members who secure a doctoral degree while teaching will be moved to a tenure track. Shirley Wallace recently received her doctoral candidate status. No faculty members are waived at this time.
- Faculty assignments are made by the department chair and are based on educational preparation, clinical experience, and previous teaching experience. All current teaching assignments match each faculty member's preparation and experience.
- There are two part-time faculty members who are responsible for clinical supervision only, with no classroom teaching responsibilities; each is prepared at the master's level.
- Preceptors are used for selected experiences such as pediatric clinics and some leadership experiences; signed preceptor agreements are found in the file with clinical affiliation agreements.
- Each faculty member has up to \$1,000 for professional development activities; Dr. Stiles and several full-time faculty members recently traveled to the Texas State University campus in Round Rock to see the physical set-up of their nursing and simulation labs and how these facilities were used.
- Minutes of the faculty and all committees are taken and kept in notebooks. For the most part the minutes are consistent in format and detailing, but there needs to be an accurate record of all committee meetings in order to document the decisions that are being made.
- At this time the program does not employ a lab coordinator but they are developing a designated simulation lab area and will be hiring a coordinator for the simulation lab to assist faculty in conducting high fidelity simulation learning experiences. As their facilities expand they may consider hiring a nursing lab coordinator in the future.
- Student advising and admission is done by the department of Medical and Allied Health Programs under the direction of Dr. Jack Turner. The department faculty set the admission requirements and Dr. Turner and his staff advise students and rank all qualified students each semester for admission. Dr. Turner is in the process of hiring a staff member who will be responsible for just the nursing department advising and admissions. There is very close communication between this department and the nursing department and the system seems to work well.
- Faculty files are kept in a secure area and appear to contain all necessary information including current Texas licensure, physical exam and immunization documentation, official transcripts, evaluations, and other pertinent material.

Students

- Currently there are 79 nursing students enrolled in three cohorts.

| | Admitted | Currently Enrolled/Graduated | Retention Rate |
|-------------------------|----------|------------------------------|----------------|
| Spring 2011 – Cohort 1 | 27 | 21 | 77.8% |
| Fall 2011 – Cohort 2 | 17 | 11 | 64.7% |
| Spring 2012 – No cohort | 0 | 0 | N/A |
| Fall 2012 – Cohort 3 | 35 | 28 | 80% |
| Spring 2013 – Cohort 4 | 40 | 40 | 100% |

- The Nursing Department was approved to admit 35 students initially. In the Spring of 2012, no students were admitted to the program because of the resignation of the first program director. An interim director was in place until the summer of 2012 when Dr. Anne Stiles was hired as the nursing department chair. In the Fall of 2012 the full complement of 35 students were admitted. Since Dr. Stiles was employed in July of 2012, the retention rate has improved to between 80% and 100%.
- The students are given copies of documents that outline eligibility issues related to licensure; they sign a form which is placed in their student file that verifies that they have received the eligibility information and have had a chance to ask questions about this issue.
- Students complete the TBON criminal background check (CBC) as soon as they are admitted to the program, but at this time it is not a condition of admission. The program was advised that there was legislation pending that could require that the CBC be completed prior to enrollment and they indicated they were moving in that direction as well.
- The Student Handbook has policies regarding nursing student's admission, progression, dismissal, and graduation. There are also policies related to absence, tardiness, confidentiality, health status, uniform & supplies, nursing department grading scale & testing, standardized testing, and alcohol and drug screening. As the program grows and continues to operate, these policies will continue to be refined and expanded as needed.
- The Nursing Department governance system includes students on every nursing committee to participate in developing and clarifying program policies. Students met with Dr. Stiles early in her employment regarding the possibility of changing the school uniform and the school pin. Both of these items were changed with significant student input.
- Student files are kept in a secure area and appear to contain all the necessary documents such as signed verification of receipt of eligibility issues, transcripts, program application, physical exam and immunization record, clinical evaluation forms, and other appropriate documents.

Program of Study

- The curriculum contains 59 semester credit hours of Arts and Sciences courses and 62 semester hours of nursing courses for a total 121 semester credit hours. These courses are taught over 8 long semesters and one summer. Students are admitted in both the fall and spring semesters so beginning in the fall of 2013 all courses will be taught every semester. All students must enroll in the same courses in the summer but these courses are dependent on knowledge from only Semester 1.
- The curriculum clearly incorporates established professional standards, guidelines, and competencies with clearly articulated learning and program outcomes. There is a very detailed explanation of how the curriculum was derived from the philosophy and mission with a table showing how the content of specific courses relate to the major concepts of the program, student

learning outcomes, guidelines and standards from the AACN and ACEN, and *the Differentiated Essential Competencies of Graduates of Texas Nursing Programs*.

- A variety of instructional methods are used throughout the curriculum including but not limited to lecture-discussion, small group projects, clinical journals, research article analysis, student presentations, laboratory skills demonstrations and check-offs, low fidelity clinical simulations, process recordings, and direct patient care.
- The curriculum encompasses the entire age span and includes maternity and newborn nursing.
- Both concept maps and nursing care plans are used along with assessment forms, drug cards, and laboratory results to plan care for patients with a variety of medical diagnoses.
- The faculty is currently identifying required nursing skills that must be mastered in each course for progression to the next semester. They are also developing a simulation area in the nursing laboratory to begin high fidelity nursing simulations. A Laboratory Simulation Coordinator position has been approved and advertising will begin in the near future. This individual will assist the faculty in developing and coordinating these simulations.
- Dosage and calculations tests are given each semester with increasing difficulty; students must score 90% in two attempts.
- Faculty development of a Curriculum Framework will help tie all the elements of the curriculum together, demonstrate how the nursing content is organized, and show how the curriculum builds from one semester to the next increasing the nursing students ability to meet performance expectations.
- Courses often contain some on-line enhancement, but at this time no courses are offered completely on-line.

Clinical Learning Experiences

- Review of files indicated clinical contracts for the program were current. Faculty have been able to identify a wide variety of clinical learning sites where students can meet their clinical objectives. Huntsville Memorial Hospital is a 125 bed acute care facility that provides a wide variety of acute care nursing experiences for students, including some preceptor leadership experiences. The surveyor spoke with two graduates employed in this facility and they were very, very positive about the program and particularly the current program director and faculty. These graduates confirmed that the clinical experiences in the program prepared them for practice.
- Each clinical faculty member has 10 students or less in the clinical setting if they are supervising direct patient care and 12 students if there are preceptor experiences. Patient assignments are given to the student on the day of the experience so that student travel is minimized and preparation time is maximized for patients who will receive care from the student.
- Clinical experiences are plentiful in this area especially since the university is close to the Woodlands area. Many of these facilities now prefer to have BSN students rather than ADN students but the faculty work with the ADN Programs so that all students can have good clinical experiences.
- Courses that have preceptor clinical experiences have written guidelines regarding the required communication between the faculty and the preceptor, especially the frequency of the communications. Ultimately the faculty is responsible for the student's clinical evaluation with input from the preceptor.
- The only observational experiences that are used are with a wound care nurse and occasionally with other health care providers such as respiratory care or physical therapy to give students a broad picture of the health care team.

Facilities, Resources, and Services

- The facilities currently being used by the Nursing Department are adequate for classroom and laboratory learning experiences. The building is old and has been adapted for use by the nursing department until such time as a new Allied Health facility can be built to house nursing and other Allied Health Programs that will be added to the University offerings over the next few years.
- The learning laboratory is in two large rooms with 10 beds; it is well stocked with supplies and there are adequate manikins for student practice.
- The department currently has two high fidelity manikins; one simulation manikin and one manikin that mimics the delivery of a newborn. A new simulation area is being designed to house these manikins and a Simulation Coordinator will be hired to assist the faculty with developing the technical skills to run a simulation with the students.
- There are currently two support staff to assist the nursing program: Dr. Stiles has an Administrative Assistant who has excellent skills and initiative; the Department Secretary is responsible for student files and acts as a receptionist for the area as well. The faculty is very pleased with the support provided by these two individuals.

Records and Reports

- All confidential files are kept in a secure location.
- The Department Chair and the University attorney agreed on a 3 year retention period for all student records which meets BON criteria.

Total Program Evaluation

- The Program has a very well written Master Program Evaluation Plan (MPEP) which is based on Donabedian's model for measuring nursing education program outcomes. This evaluation plan designates the Goals/Objectives to be evaluated, whose responsibility it is to complete the evaluation, the frequency of the evaluation, the location of the data, and the results and actions. The only item that could be added would be for Goals/Objectives evaluated less frequently than annually, some designation such as odd years in the spring, etc. to be sure no item is overlooked.
- This MPEP is being used to make appropriate changes in specific areas of the nursing program demonstrating the use of evidence based practice.

Future Plans

- Based on the current success of the program, future plans that were discussed with the surveyor included the development (which has already started) of an RN to BSN Program for the University's Woodlands Campus and the development in the near future of an LVN to BSN Program for the graduates of the VN Program housed at Huntsville Memorial Hospital.
- In the Exit Report the surveyor emphasized the importance of focusing on fine tuning and possibly expanding the generic program before any new programs which will require additional faculty, clinical sites, and more campus skill labs are implemented.
- Minutes of all committee meetings need to be kept to document all decisions. The minutes need to be organized by committees in a chronological order to show how each area of the Master Program Evaluation Plan is being implemented.

DRAFT LETTER

July 22, 2013

Anne Stiles, PhD, RN, Chair
Department of Nursing
Baccalaureate Degree Nursing Education Program
Sam Houston State University
245 Academic Building III, Box 2396
Huntsville, Texas 77341-2369

Dear Dr. Stiles:

At the July 18-19, 2013 meeting, the members of the Texas Board of Nursing discussed the report of the April 18, 2013 survey visit to the Sam Houston State University Baccalaureate Degree Nursing Education Program in Huntsville, Texas. The Program Evaluator wishes to thank the program for the cooperation in making the survey visit a positive experience that provided documentation of the program's current status of operation.

Based upon the discussion and review of the survey report, it was the decision of the Board to accept the findings from the survey visit and issue two recommendations:

1. The program should complete the revision of the Conceptual Model for the curriculum to improve the flow of the curriculum elements throughout the program of study. The completed revision of the Conceptual Model shall be submitted to Board Staff no later than October 1, 2013.
2. The program should develop a plan to document faculty decision-making in the committee minutes and organize the minutes chronologically to provide evidence of decision-making. A written plan for documenting and filing faculty minutes shall be provided to Board Staff no later than September 1, 2013.

A recommendation is a specific suggestion based upon program assessment indirectly related to the rules to which the program must respond but in a method of their choosing.

If you have any questions or if we may be of assistance to the program, please do not hesitate to call on us. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Kathy Shipp, MSN, RN, FNP
President of the Board

Janice I. Hooper, PhD, RN, FRE
Lead Nursing Consultant for Education

Copy: John Pascarella, PhD, Dean, College of Sciences